

**AFFIDAVIT OF SPECIAL AGENT PETER COSTE IN SUPPORT OF  
APPLICATIONS FOR A CRIMINAL COMPLAINT AND A SEARCH WARRANT**

I, Peter Coste, having been duly sworn, do hereby depose and state as follows:

**Agent Background**

1. I am a Special Agent with Homeland Security Investigations (“HSI”) and have been so employed since December 2018. I have successfully completed a training program in conducting criminal investigations at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Georgia. In 2017, I graduated from Fairleigh Dickinson University at Teaneck, New Jersey with a B.A. degree in Individualized Studies with a Specialization in Criminal Justice. My current duties as an HSI Special Agent include conducting investigations involving the fraudulent acquisition, production, and misuse of United States immigration documents, United States passports, and identity documents. Due to my training, experience, and conversations with other law enforcement officers, I am familiar with the methods, routines, and practices of document counterfeiters, vendors, and persons who fraudulently obtain or assume false identities.

2. I am also a member of HSI’s Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force (“DBFTF”), a specialized field investigative group comprised of personnel from various state, local, and federal agencies with expertise in detecting, deterring and disrupting organizations and individuals involved in various types of document, identity and benefit fraud schemes. DBFTF is currently investigating suspected aliens who are believed to have obtained stolen identities of United States citizens living in Puerto Rico and used those identities to obtain public benefits, which they would not otherwise be eligible to receive, including Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles (“RMV”) identity documents, Social Security numbers, MassHealth benefits, public housing benefits, and unemployment benefits. Agents have conducted an analysis of individuals who have received certain public benefits in Puerto Rico and Massachusetts on or about the same

dates in an effort to identify individuals in Massachusetts who have been unlawfully and fraudulently using the identities of United States citizens.

**Purpose of Affidavit**

3. I submit this affidavit in support of an application for a criminal complaint charging Yohnny Yoelinson PEGUERO VILLALONA with (1) Misuse of a Social Security Number, in violation of 42 U.S.C. § 408(a)(7)(B), and (2) Aggravated Identity Theft, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1028A.

4. I also submit this affidavit in support of an application for a search warrant for the following property: 110 Jefferson St. #3, Lynn, Massachusetts, as described in Attachment A. I have probable cause to believe that this property contains evidence, fruits, and instrumentalities of the crimes identified above, as described in Attachment B.

5. As set forth in more detail below, there is evidence that PEGUERO VILLALONA unlawfully used the name and SSN of a real person while knowing that these identifiers belonged to a real person. Among the evidence that PEGUERO VILLALONA knew that this identity was that of a real person is his successful use of the identity to obtain multiple official government identification documents and to obtain government-funded health benefits.

6. This affidavit is based on my personal knowledge, information provided to me by other law enforcement officers and federal agents, and my review of records described herein. This affidavit is not intended to set forth all of the information that I have learned during this investigation but includes only the information necessary to establish probable cause for the requested complaint and search warrant.

**Probable Cause**

**The RMV Application**

7. On October 14, 2016, an individual submitted an application for the renewal of a Massachusetts driver's license at the RMV office in Wilmington, Massachusetts. The applicant represented on the application that he was a person whose initials were J.R.R.<sup>1</sup> He further represented that his date of birth was xx/xx/1983, and that his Social Security Number ("SSN") was xxx-xx-2772. The RMV took a photograph of the applicant on October 14, 2016 as part of the driver's license application. The individual purporting to be J.R.R. signed the application under penalty of perjury. As a result of that application, the RMV issued the person purporting to be J.R.R. a driver's license with no. Sxxxx0531.

**Use of Identity to Obtain MassHealth Coverage**

8. Medicaid is a joint federal-state program that provides health coverage to certain categories of people, including eligible low-income adults, children, pregnant women, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Medicaid is administered by the states according to federal requirements, and is funded jointly by states and the federal government. MassHealth is the Medicaid Program in Massachusetts.

9. According to MassHealth records, between April 2012 and March 2015, at least three applications for MassHealth benefits were submitted to MassHealth in the name of J.R. Each of the three applications list the name of J.R., a SSN of xxx-xx-2772, and a date of birth of xx/xx/1983. On or about April 13, 2012, a Massachusetts Driver's License bearing the name

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<sup>1</sup> I am protecting the identity of the victim by using initials only. The identity of the victim, J.R.R. is known to the government. These initials represent the victim's first and last names. To protect the victim's privacy, only the initials "J.R.R." and "J.R." are used in this affidavit to reflect variations of the victims full name.

J.R.R. and driver's license number xxxxx0531 was submitted to MassHealth in connection with one such application.

### **Confirmation of a Valid Social Security Number**

The Social Security Administration ("SSA"), Office of Inspector General has confirmed that Social Security Number xxx-xx-2772 is assigned to J.R.R. There are a total of fourteen SSN card applications associated with SSN xxx-xx-2772. All fourteen SSN card applications were filed at SSA offices in Puerto Rico.

### **Identification of the Imposter**

10. The Dominican Republic has a national identification card which is called a Cedula. HSI obtained information concerning Cedula Number xxx-xxxxx93-2, in the name of PEGUERO VILLALONA, born in 1986, in Bani, the Dominican Republic, which included the photograph and fingerprints associated with this Cedula.

11. On January 13, 2013, the Massachusetts State Police in Revere arrested an individual purporting to be J.R.R. for the charge of Operating a Motor Vehicle with a Suspended License. Following the January 13, 2013 arrest, as part of the booking process, police took fingerprints and a photo of the individual purporting to be J.R.R.

12. The fingerprint impressions from PEGUERO VILLALONA's Cedula Number xxx-xxxxx93-2 and the January 13, 2013 fingerprint impressions from the Massachusetts State Police arrest of J.R.R. were sent to the HSI Forensic Laboratory for analysis. The HSI Forensic Laboratory determined that these fingerprint impressions belonged to the same individual.

13. I have compared the following three photographs: (a) the October 14, 2016 photograph from the RMV database of the applicant purporting to be J.R.R.; (b) the January 13, 2013 photograph taken of the purported J.R.R. after the arrest by the Massachusetts State Police

in Revere; (c) and the photograph from PEGUERO VILLALONA's Cedula Number xxx-xxxxx93-2. I conclude that the three photographs all depict the same individual.

14. Information from Puerto Rico's Driver and Vehicle Information Database ("DAVID") assigned to an individual named J.R.R. indicates that this person has a date of birth of xx/xx/1983, is assigned SSN xxx-xx-2772 and lives in Carolina, Puerto Rico. I have examined a photograph associated with that DAVID record for this person and conclude that the individual depicted in that photograph is not the same as the individual depicted in the three photographs from the preceding paragraph.

#### **Search for Identification Documents**

15. Agents obtained an I-130 Petition for Alien Relative from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, dated February 3, 2018, filed on PEGUERO VILLALONA's behalf by his spouse, who listed 110 Jefferson Street, Apartment 3, Lynn, Massachusetts as their physical address.

16. RMV records associated with driver's license number xxxxx0531 and applications submitted in the name of J.R. (with SSN xxx-xx-2772 and date of birth xx/xx/1983) include the following:

- a. RMV "Current Image, License/ID and Demographic Information" record with print date of June 3, 2019, which depicts the photograph of PEGUERO VILLALONA taken on October 14, 2016 (under the J.R.R. identity), a residential address on Chatham Street in Lynn<sup>2</sup>, and a mailing address of 110 Jefferson Street Apt. 3 in Lynn, Massachusetts.
- b. October 14, 2016 RMV application that lists a residential address on Chatham

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<sup>2</sup> Other documents associated with J.R. also list certain addresses on Chatham Street in Lynn.

Street in Lynn, and a mailing address of 110 Jefferson Street in Lynn, Massachusetts.

- c. November 14, 2016 RMV application that lists a residential address on Chatham Street in Lynn, and a mailing address of 110 Jefferson Street, Apt. 3, in Lynn, Massachusetts.

17. On October 18, 2019 and November 5, 2019, agents conducted surveillance at 110 Jefferson St. Lynn, Massachusetts. On the dates of October 18, 2019 and November 5, 2019, agents observed PEGUERO VILLALONA (the individual using the J.R.R. identity) leave 110 Jefferson St., enter a vehicle, and depart the area.

18. I know, based on my training and experience, that:

- a. Individuals often keep identification documents and other evidence of identity for long periods – sometimes years – and tend to retain such documents even when they depart a given residence. Such documents include social security cards, passports, tax returns, legal documents, utility bills, phone bills, health insurance or prescription cards, medical records, marriage licenses, family records, scrapbooks, photographs, diplomas and other school records, birth certificates, immunization records, bank records, credit card statements, personal correspondence and books or mementos on which they have inscribed their names.
- b. Individuals often keep identification documents and other evidence of identity in their residence, in part to ensure the security of these documents and in part to allow for access to these documents when needed.
- c. In addition, it is common for those who use other persons' identities without

authorization to maintain fraudulently obtained identification documents in secure locations within their residence to conceal them from law enforcement authorities; and,

- d. It is common for individuals who use fraudulently obtained identification documents to retain those documents for substantial periods of time so that they can continue to use the fraudulently obtained identities.

19. All agents participating in the search of the premises described in Attachment A will be informed of the full name represented by the initials that appear in Attachment B.

### **Conclusion**

20. Based on the foregoing, I have probable cause to believe that, on or about October 14, 2016, Yohnny Yoelinson PEGUERO VILLALONA (1) falsely represented, with intent to deceive and for any purpose, a number to be the social security account number assigned by the Commissioner of Social Security to him, when in fact such number is not the social security account number assigned by the Commissioner of Social Security to him, all in violation of 42 U.S.C. § 408(a)(7)(B); and (2) knowingly transferred, possessed and used, during and in relation to any felony violation enumerated in 18 U.S.C. 1028A(c), and without lawful authority, a means of identification of another person in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1028A.

21. Based on the forgoing, I have probable cause to believe that evidence, fruits, and instrumentalities of these crimes, as described in Attachment B, are located in the premises described in Attachment A.

Sworn to under the pains and penalties of perjury.



PETER COSTE  
Special Agent  
Homeland Security Investigations

**Dec 6, 2019**

Subscribed and sworn before me on December \_\_\_, 2019



HON. JUDITH G. DEIN  
United States Magistrate Judge



**ATTACHMENT A**

**Premises To Be Searched**

The location to be searched is Apartment 3 of 110 Jefferson St. Lynn, Massachusetts, which is a blue multifamily residential building with the number 110 in between the two front entrance doors. The front doors are in the middle of the building and have five steps up from the walkway. Photographs of the building are attached.

**Front View of 110 Jefferson St, Lynn**



**ATTACHMENT B**

**Evidence to Be Searched for and Seized**

Evidence, fruits, and instrumentalities of violations of 42 U.S.C. § 408(a)(7)(B) and/or 18 U.S.C. § 1028A, including but not limited to:

1. The following records, documents, and items referencing Yohnny Yoelinson PEGUERO VILLALONA or the individual known to agents with the initials J.R.R., J.R., and/or J.R.R.C., SSN of xxx-xx-2772, and date of birth of xx/xx/1983:
  - a. Any and all state-issued or apparently state-issued identification documents, notes, statements, and/or receipts that reference same;
  - b. Any and all immigration documents, including but not limited to U.S. or foreign issued (or apparently issued) passports and identification cards;
  - c. Any and all documents identifying citizenship, including but not limited to birth certificates; voter registration cards; cedula; and social security cards.
  - d. Any and all documents relating to foreign or domestic travel, including tickets; schedules; itineraries; or receipts.
  - e. Any and all employment records, bank records, credit card records, tax records, marriage records, divorce records, baptismal or confirmation records, residential lease or rental records, insurance records, utility/phone/cable records, arrest/court records, or records of school, training, or counseling.